



Dear Representative Luxenberg, Senator Moore, and members of the Housing Committee:

My name is Sharon Terrell, I'm a member of the Hartford tenant's Union and

Make the Road CT, I am testifying in support of a rent cap and in support of SB 4, with changes to better protect tenants.

I have resided at 27 Marshall Street in Hartford since July 2019. I'm here tonight to ask the people in power to please take our demands seriously. You need to hear the stories of our abusive property owners and not dismiss us. It is about time that all of you reinforce the penalties and laws against these dangerous and exploitative Landlords. Do your job, and keep our families under a roof, safe, and living in the neighborhood that we help to build as a community.

Our working families of Hartford are struggling to live paycheck to paycheck, put food on the table, and pay rent. Home should be the one source of continued strength stability, comfort, and dignity. I know for sure that with my unionized neighbors, we are going to keep these bad actors accountable to get tenants dignified housing and good quality of life.

We the tenants have been held hostage by slumlords for years of negligence living in atrocious conditions deserve decent living and a safe and clean environment.

The games that slumlords play are meant to force rent increments, destabilize our communities, and force us out of our apartments. Slumlords made our apartment conditions so bad that folks are compelled to leave. Then the Slumlords make improvements to lure market-rate tenants using tenants' money who decides to stay because there is nowhere else to go.

These actions are deplorable and we are going to do all we can to stop them. It's wicked, heartless, demoralizing, and an abuse of tenants' human rights.

We the tenants are working very hard to keep our homes, many of us were essential workers during the pandemic and we usually are exploited in our jobs. A rent cap is more than necessary, because the rent increases deliberately every year, and our incomes do not. Many of our neighbors have been evicted from their apartments, many of them single mothers and nobody is doing anything for us.

All of you were elected to represent us, so I'm here demanding a Rent cap Asap to keep rooves over the heads of my neighbors and me. We have been demanding and applying to all the sources meant for tenant's rights, but everything is obsolete and isn't working, my attendance here is to demand real change for my neighbors, for me, and for generations to come. We are dealing with a critical emergency of rent increases from \$150 to \$250 monthly in some cases which don't seem to have any control! If you do not have new leases signed they will charge \$200 more until you sign the new lease plus the rent already incremented. You have been an accomplice in allowing this to happen to the low-income, black, and brown, immigrant communities of Hartford. Enough is enough, we need to tax slumlords so they stop profiting at the expense of the tenants, and reinforce penalties and laws against them and their abuses.

The claim that rent stabilization impacts housing quality is false. Maintenance has always been an issue for renters long before this policy and will continue to be one that needs to be addressed with other complementary policies. What I do know is that having good cause and rent stabilization protections will mean that I can ask for repairs with the safety and security of knowing that my landlord can't displace me (by increasing my rent or evicting me) for asking. Knowing that I'm protected means that I can advocate for my right to safe and habitable housing without fear of retaliation.

Recent polling data indicates 72% of CT voters support a 2.5% annual cap on rent increases.

I strongly support a rent cap, but SB 4 would be stronger with the following changes:

- **The cap should be lower—I suggest 2.5 or 3%.** This tracks pre-pandemic average rent increases and would be affordable and predictable to tenants.
- **It should cover apartments in between tenants** so landlords can't push out tenants to increase the rent.
- **It should expand good cause eviction protections** to cover all tenants so they have greater stability in their homes.

Sincerely,

Sharon Terrell

Hartford, CT